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dollars; this money to be used in payment for postage, printing and incidental expenses.

10. Address specimens and communications to the director of the Exchange.

*Washington, D. C.*

DR. GEO. VASEY,

*Botanist, Department Agriculture.*

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## EDITORIAL.

THE NOMENCLATURE of vascular plants seems to be in somewhat of a ferment. The law of priority every one recognizes, and that mile-stone in our progress has been passed long since. The application of the law is the question just now, and one that must be settled. The way of settling it is of far less importance than to have it settled. Fixity is what we must have, and we must have it even at the expense of some of our most cherished prejudices. Shall the law of priority apply only to the combined generic and specific name, or to the specific appellation as well? All of us have prejudices, backed by very good reasons as well as sentiment, in favor of one or the other of these views. But it will never do for us to go ahead in sublime indifference of each other. To what a chaotic state would such a proceeding lead? It is hardly the thing for a monographer to carefully study some group and publish his results in a paper in which relationships are the chief thing, and names of very minor importance; and then for some catalogue-maker to hunt through the synonymy and give different names to many of the plants in a publication in which names are the chief things. We must work together, or justice will never be done to those to whom justice is due. It has occurred to us that we could reach some uniformity of action, if not of opinion, that would save American botany at least from the chaos toward which it seems drifting. Prejudice and sentiment, and the names of plants, are all of so much less importance than uniformity that they ought to be laid aside for the sake of any sort of an agreement. Would it not be a feasible thing to have this subject discussed by the Botanical Club next August at Cleveland? Some plan might be devised by which the opinions of all working botanists could be obtained, and upon this basis some mutual understanding might be reached. At any rate, a full discussion would do no harm.

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## OPEN LETTERS.

The Exchange Club.

My attention has been called to an article of Mr. A. A. Crozier's in the last number of the GAZETTE, concerning the proposed Botanical Exchange. This article did not emanate from the committee. The objectionable point in the article seems to be an obscure intimation that under